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C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 000867

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/08/2028  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ENRG](#) [ECON](#) [GT](#)  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S FAREWELL CALL ON PRESIDENT COLOM

REF: [A.](#) GUATEMALA 783  
[B.](#) GUATEMALA 821  
[C.](#) GUATEMALA 854  
[D.](#) GUATEMALA 759

Classified By: Ambassador James M. Derham for reasons 1.4 (b&d).  
Summary -----

[¶1.](#) (C) During the Ambassador's July 8 farewell call on President Colom, Colom defended his decision to sign a PetroCaribe deal with Venezuela, Colom to Sign PetroCaribe Deal -----

[¶2.](#) (C) During his July 8 farewell call on President Alvaro Colom and Foreign Minister Haroldo Rodas, the Ambassador inquired about President C

[¶3.](#) (C) Foreign Minister Rodas added that the decision to join PetroCaribe was strictly economic. The GOV had pressed the GOG to join the Venez

[¶4.](#) (C) (Note: FRG Congresswoman Zury Rios separately told the Ambassador that she believed the PetroCaribe deal, which requires congressional

[¶5.](#) (C) President Colom lamented the recent deaths in a helicopter accident of Minister of Government Vinicio Gomez and Vice Minister Edgar Her

[¶6.](#) (C) The Ambassador asked about Environment Minister Luis Ferrate, noting that Ferrate's indiscreet public declarations at times gave potent Menchu Inciting Indigenous Communities -----

[¶7.](#) (C) Regarding the investment climate, the Ambassador raised the June 21 incident in which indigenous protesters opposed to the construction

[¶8.](#) (C) Colom said Menchu was a "fabrication" of French anthropologist and author Elizabeth Burgos, who wrote the book, "I, Rigoberta Menchu," Comment -----

[¶9.](#) (C) President Colom took this opportunity to reiterate the high priority he places on good relations with the United States, and was concer